

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8615

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP, FI

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT KEKKONEN'S 75TH BIRTHDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 1975

1. POLOFF TODAY DISCUSSED FORMAT OF CELEBRATION OF PRESIDENT KEKKONEN'S 75TH BIRTHDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 1975 WITH MFA PROTOCOL CHIEF CASTRE, WHO IS MEMBER OF RECENTLY ESTABLISHED PREPARATORY COMMITTEE.

2. CASTREN SAID THAT ALTHOUGH KEKKONEN HAD NOT YET APPROVED PROGRAM, COMMITTEE WAS SUGGESTING ONE SIMILAR TO THAT OF 70TH BIRTHDAY IN 1970. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT KEKKONEN WOULD FIRST RECEIVE FAMILY AND CLOSE PERSONAL FRIENDS AT HIS RESIDENCE IN MORNING, WOULD THEN GO TO PALACE TO RECEIVE CONGRATULATIONS OF GOVERNMENT, PARLIAMENT, DIPLOMATIC CORPS, ETC., THROUGH THE DAY. EVENING PROGRAM STILL UNCLEAR. IN 1970 HE HAD INTIMATE DINNER FOR HIS PERSONAL HUNTING AND FISHING BUDDIES AT PALACE.

3. DIPLOMATIC CORPS WOULD PAY ITS RESPECTS IN CORPORE, WITH SHORT SPEECH BY DEAN ONLY. IN 1970 ABOUT FIVE AMBASSADORS WERE RECEIVED AS SEPARATE GROUP SINCE THEY WERE BRINGING GIFTS FROM THEIR HEAD OF STATE. AMONG THESE COUNTRIES WERE HUNGARY, TURKEY, AND AUTRIA.

4. SPECIAL EMISSARIES BEARING GIFTS WERE ALSO RECEIVED FROM SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES AND USSR. THESE WERE
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RESPECTIVELY PRINCE BERTIL FROM SWEDEN CROWN PRINCE

HARLAD FROM NORWAY, PRINCE HENRIK FROM DENMARK, AND THE
DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF SUPREME SOVIET. THESE REPRESENTATIVES
HAD NOT BEEN "INVITED" BECAUSE ACCORDING TO FINNISH CUSTOM
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATORS DO NOT INVITE GUESTS --
THE LATTER JUST COME. FINNS HAVE QUITE OFTEN LIMITED
REPRESENTATION ON HIGHER LEVELS AT SPECIAL OCCASIONS TO
NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES ONLY.

5. EMBASSY'S CORPORATE MEMORY DOES NOT EXTEND TO 1970
AND WE HAVE NO INFO ON WHAT USG DID TO CONGRATULATE
KEKKONEN. WE DO NOT THINK THAT FINNS EXPECT ANY HIGH
LEVEL US REPRESENTATION, BUT CERTAINLY WOULD EXPECT AT
LEAST A CONGRATULATORY TELEGRAM OR WHATEVER GREATER RECOGNITION
WE MAY HAVE SHOWN IN 1970.

6. WE DO FEEL THAT SOME TYPE OF GIFT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE
IF IT IS UNLIKELY THAT PRESIDENT KEKKONEN WILL BE IN-
VITED TO VISIT THE US IN 1975 OR 1975 AS RECOMMENDED
BY THE EMBASSY IN HELSINKI 1021 OF MAY 1974. WE WOULD
BE GLAD TO SUGGEST POSSIBLE FIGTS IF THE DEPARTMENT
WISHES TO MARK KEKKONEN'S 75TH BIRTHDAY IN THIS MANNER.
ADVISE.
AUSTAD

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